

The Week That Was (Aug 23, 2008) brought to you by SEPP

NO TWTW ON AUG. 30. SPEAKING AT BLED (SLOVENIA) STRATEGIC FORUM

Quote of the Week:

"If you are saving humanity, you don't have to stick to the truth" Dutch economist and author Hans Labohm commenting on Holland's "Green Messiah"

This week, a small victory: *In an Aug 1 letter to NOAA, the Chamber of Commerce requested that the Federal Register notice [Federal Register 73(138): 41042; July 17, 2008] concerning the Synthesis Report "be withdrawn until such time as the underlying SAP documents [21 reports of the CCSP] necessary for a robust public review and comment have been completed, peer reviewed, and made publicly available."* While NOAA will not withdraw the notice for comments, it will, in the next several weeks, file another Federal Register notice, providing for comment when all of the synthesis reports are public.

So far, the completed SAP reports are: 1-1, 2-1, 2-2, 3-1, 3-3, 4-3, 4-4, 4-5 and 4-7. See <http://www.climate-science.gov/Library/sap/sap-summary.php> (accessed July 31, 2008).

We need to win on the science of GW – not just on a technicality. This electronic docket will become the archive of what was filed to assure full transparency on the CCSP-SAP-USP report.

<http://www.globalwarming.org/nationalassessment>

Please use your respective network/blogs to broadcast the availability. All comments should be sent to William Yeatman, CEI WYeatman@cei.org. The site already has several comments posted.

Background: Past TWTW (Aug 2, 9, and 16) told you about the horrors of the EPA staff's plan to control CO₂. To view the EPA-ANPR (and read at least the first few pages) go to <http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2008/pdf/E8-16432.pdf>

Then NOAA released for comment the draft of what's called the Unified Synthesis Product (USP) from a decade or so of federal efforts called the Climate Change Science Program (CCSP) that have so far cost about \$20 billion of your tax money. The USP is supposed to provide the scientific underpinnings for the EPA's proposed rulemaking. To see this shining exemplar of propaganda trumping science, visit <http://downloads.climate-science.gov/sap/usp/usp-prd-all.pdf>

Our response to the CCSP-USP has three parts: (1) The human contribution to GW is insignificant. (2) Sea-level rise is natural and beyond our control. (3) Models are not able to predict global impacts – still less regional ones. Overall recommendation: The CCSP-USP should be scrapped.

SEPP Science Editorial

The absence of a warming trend in the last 10 years cannot be used to deny the existence of a greenhouse effect from rising CO₂. All we can say is that whatever is producing the cooling, whether an internal oscillation of the atmosphere-ocean system or external cause like solar, it is large enough to cancel the putative warming from rising CO₂. We cannot even deduce from this cancellation what the climate sensitivity to CO₂ is.

We can however state with some assurance that natural climate changes can be as large or larger than those produced by increases in CO₂. We can get some guidance from the observed increase between 1920-40, which was almost surely of natural origin -- although some authors and the IPCC have at times maintained that it is anthropogenic. [They deduced this from a statistical analysis that is certainly wrong]

1. Industry group asks NOAA to withdraw major climate report

2. The high costs of proposed Cap&Trade global warming legislation

3. Growing challenge to prevailing view on climate change

4. South African engineers praise NIPCC

5. Nuclear power industry double-crossed by Greens

6. Cognitive dissonance in the media

7. Hansen's sea level predictions

8. Theoretical physicist and mathematician Freeman Dyson on global warming

NEWS YOU CAN USE

“The advent of high-accuracy satellite altimetry has led to estimates that, since about 1993, global average sea level has been rising at a rate of $2.8 \pm 0.4 \text{ mm yr}^{-1}$ ” but Carl Wunsch (MIT) points out that “the widely quoted altimetric global average values may well be correct, but the accuracies being inferred in the literature are not testable by existing in situ observations”. He concludes with his sea level estimations for 1993-2004 which “produce a global mean of about 1.6 mm yr^{-1} , or about 60% of the pure altimetric estimate, of which about 70% is from the addition of freshwater”. If the rates do not accelerate, this means 16 mm/decade, or 16 cm over 100 years. **That's about 6.3 inches over a century.**

Is Dr. Wunsch a self-declared skeptic? Definitely not. He is a widely respected oceanographer and says he is worried about climate change.

Wunsch, C., Ponte, R.M., Heimbach, P., Decadal Trends in Sea Level Patterns: 1993–2004, Journal of Climate, 2007, Vol. 20, Issue 24, pp. 5889–5911, DOI: 10.1175/2007JCLI1840.1

Shifting of the Pacific Decadal Oscillation (PDO) from its warm mode to its cool mode virtually assures global cooling for the next 25-30 years and means that the global warming of the past 30 years is over. This has significant implications for the future and indicates that the IPCC climate models were wrong in their prediction of global temperatures soaring 1degF per decade for the rest of the century.

<http://wattsupwiththat.wordpress.com/2008/07/20/shifting-of-the-pacific-decadal-oscillation-from-its-warm-mode-to-cool-mode-assures-global-cooling-for-the-next-three-decades/>

From a letter of Dr Gavin Schmidt (NASA-GISS) to Andrew Revkin (NYT):

"When it comes to decadal predictions that explain anything more than a tiny fraction of the variability in anything more than a tiny fraction of the land area, I have yet to be shown any result that says that this is possible, even theoretically."

The world has limitless supplies of coal, most located in nations friendly to the West. But coal is an abomination in the eyes of environmentalists because of its alleged contribution to global warming. Nevertheless, it will be a key ingredient in the world's energy future: India and China between them have 700 plants planned or under construction; the [UK] Government has sensibly authorised a new plant in Kent; and European [i.e. Continent] countries plan to build 50 new coal stations in the next five years.

--Irwin Stelzer, *The Daily Telegraph*, 6 August 2008

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/opinion/main.jhtml?xml=/opinion/2008/08/06/do0607.xml>

"If you tell a lie big enough and keep repeating it, people will eventually come to believe it. The lie can be maintained only for such time as the State can shield the people from the political, economic and/or

military consequences of the lie. It thus becomes vitally important for the State to use all of its powers to repress dissent, for the truth is the mortal enemy of the lie, and thus by extension, the truth is the greatest enemy of the State." -- *Josef Goebbels*

As per usual, reality has failed to match the hype of the climate doomsayers. According to collated data from the NASA Marshall Space Flight Center and the University of Illinois, Arctic ice extent was 30 per cent greater on August 11, 2008 than it was on the August 12, 2007. This is a conservative estimate based on the map projection. -- *Paul Joseph Watson, Prison Planet August 19, 2008*

UNDER THE BOTTOM LINE

" 'Perfect Storm' Killing Earth's Frogs"--headline, CBSNews.com, Aug. 12 "Oceans on the Precipice: Scripps Scientist Warns of Mass Extinctions and 'Rise of Slime' "--headline, Scripps Institution of Oceanography press release, Aug. 13

Breaking News From 1492 "Believers in Flat Earth Not About to Change Minds"--headline, FoxNews.com, Aug. 14 [Courtesy James Taranto WSJ]

The Swedish Army has sent specialist troops to Georgia to help them fight --- climate change. This seems to be the most pressing issue there right now. See enclosed link from the Ministry of Defence.

<http://www.regeringen.se/sb/d/10172/a/102757>

There's something rotten north of Denmark: Arctic ice refuses to melt as ordered

http://www.theregister.co.uk/2008/08/15/goddard_arctic_ice_mystery/

Comment: The only energy sources they seem to like are the ones we don't have. (WSJ)

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB121901822110148233.html>

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1. INDUSTRY GROUP ASKS NOAA TO WITHDRAW MAJOR CLIMATE REPORT

Lauren Morello, ClimateWire reporter (08/04/2008)

Five years after complaints about data quality quashed the first federal assessment of climate change in the United States, an industry group is resurrecting the tactic. On Friday the U.S. Chamber of Commerce asked the government to withdraw a major Climate Change Science Program report released in May. The group argued that the analysis violates a federal law that requires agencies to employ "sound science" because it relies on unpublished information.

Environmental groups blasted the move calling it an attempt to cast doubt on climate science. But Chamber officials maintained that the report includes references to unpublished federal climate studies, which leave the public unable to determine whether its conclusions are valid. "The public cannot presently judge the reliability and objectivity of the synthesis report, because the public cannot access the underlying documents on which the synthesis report is based," the group wrote in official comments it filed Friday with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Agency, the lead agency that produced the analysis.

The report -- the second national climate assessment -- predicts that the United States will "very likely" experience rising sea levels and increasing droughts, heat waves, intense storms, and resulting illness and premature death over the next century as climate change intensifies. The document also concludes it is "likely that there has been a substantial human contribution to surface temperature increases in North America."

Bill Kovacs, the chamber's vice president for environment technology and regulatory affairs, said the group wants the federal government to withdraw the report until the unpublished studies are completed and publicly available. Some of the studies -- a series of 21 reports planned by the Climate Change Science Program -- are not scheduled for release until November. "We're asking them to withdraw until such a time as they can put everything out as a comprehensive whole," he said. "They can withdraw it, finish the publication and put it back out. It's not a permanent action."

But Kovacs also hinted that the industry group's complaints run deeper, extending to the scientific validity of climate models and peer-reviewed studies cited in the report. In addition to work by the Climate Change Science Program, the report references analyses published by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and scientific journals. "We're viewing this as part of the scientific evidence that is going to be put in the public record" as part of EPA's ongoing rulemaking process that will determine whether the agency regulates carbon dioxide emissions under the Clean Air Act, he said. "It's all the same science that's being relied upon."

Environmentalists who participated in a lawsuit last year that forced the Bush administration to publish the report said they believed the Chamber of Commerce's aim is to suppress findings designed to help policymakers at the federal state and local levels plan for climate change. "The Chamber of Commerce is pursuing a last-century, head-in-the-sand strategy to suppress climate information," said Brendan Cummings a senior attorney at the Center for Biological Diversity. "They are doing a disservice to all the businesses and communities they purport to represent. Climate models have been the best available science for decades now."

Kert Davies, research director of Greenpeace USA, called the request to withdraw the climate report "more of the same." "The chamber and its allies have been trying for over a decade to slow down the uptake of climate science," he said. "Now we have a clear signal from the Bush administration that there are identifiable local impacts from climate change."

At the heart of the chamber's withdrawal request is the Data Quality Act. Following on the heels of a successful challenge, the law, also known as the Information Quality Act, requires federal agencies to

ensure the integrity of the information they use and distribute. It also allows outside parties to petition to force the correction of information they believe is wrong.

Between 2000 and 2003 the Competitive Enterprise Institute used the act to successfully challenge the first national climate assessment released in 2000, which it called "junk science." The group said the report's reliance on uncertain climate computer models rendered its conclusions useless and argued that it was not subject to certain laws governing the convening and conduct of advisory panels. In the end, the Bush administration settled the group's legal challenges by agreeing to place a disclaimer on the national assessment report Web site, stating the document was not subject to Data Quality Act guidelines (Greenwire, Oct. 3, 2006).

Comment by Prof. Robert Davis (Univ of Virginia)

"This [USP] report is not intended to be an unbiased review of climate change science; rather, it is a political document that emphasizes the worst possible theorized impacts of climate change in the hopes that the U.S. Government will use this report in support of a decision to regulate carbon dioxide emissions."

2. THE HIGH COSTS OF PROPOSED GLOBAL WARMING LEGISLATION

The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) have each released new reports showing global warming legislation would inflict serious economic punishment on American consumers.

The EPA analyzed three bills that would cap and trade greenhouse gas emissions:

- o The least restrictive, sponsored by Sens. Jeff Bingaman (D-NM) and Arlen Specter (R-Penn.), would require trimming U.S. emissions by less than 4 percent by the year 2050.
- o A more stringent bill, by Sens. Joe Lieberman (I-Conn.) and John McCain (R-Ariz.), would require reductions in U.S. emissions of nearly 16 percent by 2050.
- o One of the most restrictive bills, introduced by Lieberman and John Warner (R-Va.), would force businesses and consumers to cut their emissions 44 percent by 2050.

According to the EPA and CBO, each of these bills would substantially raise energy prices and reduce economic growth:

- o Importantly, the EPA assumed in its estimates a near-tripling of nuclear power generation; without the dramatic rise in nuclear power forecast by the EPA, each legislative proposal would be far more costly than EPA estimates.
- o The EPA estimated the Lieberman-Warner bill would increase gas prices .53 cents per gallon by 2030 and \$1.40 per gallon by 2050.
- o The EPA found that by 2050 the Bingaman-Specter bill could cost the United States as much as \$1.2 trillion annually (in 2005 dollars) from lost economic production.
- o Lieberman-McCain could cost as much as \$1.3 trillion annually, and Lieberman-Warner could cost nearly \$3 trillion per year.

The CBO study confirmed greenhouse gas legislation would inflict its most devastating economic consequences on the poorest U.S. citizens: Cutting carbon dioxide emissions by merely 15 percent would reduce the disposable income of the poor by an additional 3.3 percent, compared to a 1.7 percent drop for the richest Americans.

 Source: H. Sterling Burnett, "EPA, CBO Document the High Costs of Proposed Global Warming Legislation," Heartland Institute, July 1, 2008.

<http://www.heartland.org/Article.cfm?artId=23402>

3. GROWING CHALLENGE TO PREVAILING VIEW ON CLIMATE CHANGE

William Reville, Aug 14, 2008

UNDER THE MICROSCOPE A small but growing view is that global warming is a natural process - nothing to do with human activity, writes Dr William Reville

GLOBAL warming/climate change is a very serious and important issue. It has been under scientific investigation since 1986 by the UN-sponsored Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). The IPCC declares global warming is a fact and it is driven largely by emissions of greenhouse gases from human activities (IPCC Report 2007 - <http://www.ipcc.ch/>). I have reported the IPCC reports uncritically in this column, but a growing number of scientists are now presenting evidence that contradicts the IPCC position and I will give you a flavour of their position in this article.

Some scientists always disputed the findings of the IPCC but I dismissed this largely as expert opinion hired by the international oil industry. However, it is now clear that many eminent scientists, who are not beholden to vested interests, disagree with the IPCC (e.g. physicist Freeman J Dyson who argues that the modelling methods used by IPCC are not nearly discriminating enough to reliably predict future climate conditions). The American Physical Society recently issued a statement to say: "There is a considerable presence within the scientific community of people who do not agree with the IPCC conclusion that anthropogenic CO₂ emissions are very probably likely to be primarily responsible for global warming since the Industrial Revolution."

The IPCC is a huge UN effort, supported by governments, and enlists the efforts of a great many scientific experts. Why would anyone doubt its findings? Well, critics charge the following: First, IPCC is an activist/political enterprise whose agenda is to control emissions of the greenhouse gas carbon dioxide, and concentrates exclusively on evidence that might point towards human induced climate change. Second, leading IPCC scientists reflect the positions of their governments, or seek to persuade their governments to adopt the IPCC position. Third, a small group of activists wrote the all-important Summary for Policymakers (SPM) for the four IPCC reports to-date. SPMs are revised and agreed by the member governments. The thousands of scientists who do the scientific work have no direct influence on these selective summaries. Fourth, large professional and financial rewards go to scientists who are willing to slant scientific facts to suit the IPCC agenda.

Two things strike me about these charges. First, if they are true it is amazing that no whistle-blower has emerged from among the large ranks of IPCC. Second, why does IPCC not strenuously rebut these charges?

THE US Science and Environmental Policy Project (SEPP) was set up "to base environmental policy on sound science rather than exaggerated fears". However, it has been accused of being influenced by the oil industry. SEPP has published scientific evidence (Nature, Not Human Activity Rules the Climate, S Fred Singer ed. The Heartland Institute, 2008) - www.sepp.org/publications/NIPCC_final.pdf - to illustrate that 20th-century global warming is not the once-off phenomenon of recent historical times claimed by the IPCC, and that most of the current warming is the result of natural and uncontrollable variations in solar activity and very little is being caused, or could be caused, by human emissions of greenhouse gases. The SEPP also claims that we have little to fear from global warming since human civilisation always fared better during warmer than during colder periods.

If critics of IPCC are right, global warming is inevitable and we should now concentrate our efforts on planning how to live in a warmer world. If we were travelling by bus through the middle of a dangerous continent, where the only safe regions were coastal, and we noticed the bus was almost out of petrol, we would be much better advised to immediately start planning how to survive in the interior than to spend our time frantically searching for a gallon of petrol reportedly hidden on a nearby farm.

If IPCC is correct, we must take immediate steps to greatly reduce greenhouse gas emissions or we face awful consequences from global warming. Of course, it is important to reduce our dependence on fossil fuels anyway because of their relative scarcity, and this reduction would automatically reduce carbon

dioxide emissions. If the critics are correct, any crash programme of reducing gas emissions would be a costly step that would have little or no effect on global warming but would divert funds away from fighting battles we could win - disease, poverty, etc.

Climate and weather are very complex physical phenomena and, as a biochemist, I am unable to critically adjudicate on the competing scientific claims of IPCC and its critics. IPCC represents the mainstream majority scientific position and, in the absence of very persuasive contrary evidence, I must support it. But, the growing scepticism does catch the eye and should not be ignored. It is also embarrassing to witness each side accuse the other of dishonesty. Scientists from both sides must come together to resolve this matter.

• *William Reville is associate professor of biochemistry and public awareness of science officer at UCC - [http:// understandingscience.ucc.ie/](http://understandingscience.ucc.ie/)*

http://www.irishtimes.com/newspaper/sciencetoday/2008/0814/1218477522643_pf.html

4. SOUTH AFRICAN ENGINEERS PRAISE NIPCC

http://www.engineeringnews.co.za/article.php?a_id=137932 :

A recent result of the existence of an agitated scientific bloc has been the establishment of the Nongovernmental International Panel on Climate Change. This group was activated in early 2007, and was formalised at a climate workshop in Vienna in April 2007.

It is interesting to note that the president of the Czech Republic, Dr Vaclav Klaus, stated at the UN climate conference on September 24, 2007, that it would help the debate on climate change if the current monopoly and one-sidedness of the scientific debate over climate change by the IPCC were eliminated.

The NIPCC is a collection of eminent independent scientists directed by Dr S Fred Singer, the first director of the US Weather Satellite Service. He subsequently retired as chief scientist of the US Department of Transport. The founding core of scientists of the NIPCC came from a dozen countries, and all are totally independent. They state that their primary concern is the dissemination of scientific truth.

In accurately formulated scientific documents, the NIPCC rejects many of the claims of the IPCC, particularly the notion that man-induced climate change is upon us, and is causing great harm.

Keep your eyes open for good sense from the NIPCC.

5. NUCLEAR POWER INDUSTRY DOUBLE-CROSSED

Steven Milloy, August 14, 2008

What did the nuclear power industry get for playing footsie with the "greens" on global warming? A knife in the back, it looks like. The greens now are saying that emission-free nuclear power may actually contribute to climate change.

After decades of having its growth entirely stymied by anti-nuclear environmentalists, the industry decided to help the greens lobby for global warming regulation in hopes of easing opposition to the expansion of nuclear power. Companies like Exelon, FPL Group and NRG Energy, for example, helped the greens form the U.S. Climate Action Partnership (USCAP) — a coalition of big businesses and green groups that has been leading the charge on Capitol Hill for global warming regulation.

But as the saying goes, when you lie down with dogs, you get up with fleas.

A case in point is the proposed addition of a third reactor at the Calvert Cliffs Nuclear Power Plant in southern Maryland. The greens formed a group euphemistically called the Chesapeake Safe Energy Coalition (CSEC) to oppose the new reactor. Members of the CSEC are hardcore anti-nuclear activists including the Sierra Club, Public Citizen, Maryland Public Interest Research Group (PIRG), the Maryland Green Party and the Chesapeake Physicians for Social Responsibility.

A June 2007 report by Maryland PIRG lays out the standard anti-nuclear objections against the proposed reactor, including that nuclear plants are expensive to build, radiation is inherently dangerous, uranium mining is environmentally destructive, and that nuclear waste "remains dangerous for thousands of years and no nation on earth has developed an acceptable solution for safely disposing of it."

But in this era of global warming hysteria, the standard arguments apparently aren't working.

Maryland's Gov. Martin O'Malley — who is well-regarded by environmentalists for consuming and metabolizing the green Kool-Aid on global warming — supports the Calvert Cliffs expansion. O'Malley apparently realizes that Maryland needs the electricity given the fact that the state is facing rolling blackouts on summer days starting as early as 2011. Moreover, nuclear power is emissions-free, another plus for Maryland's warmer-in-chief. His support is even more remarkable since he recently barred the installation of wind turbines on public lands.

The governor's picking nukes over wind must have sent the greens into meltdown. So in response, the desperate greens came up with a bizarre new argument: nuclear power causes global warming.

That's right, nuclear is the latest form of "dirty" energy. How can that be, you ask? Nuclear power doesn't produce greenhouse gases, does it? Well, not directly, the greens argue. But nuclear power "worsens climate change," says prominent environmentalist Amory Lovins [in a new paper](#), because it diverts money away from alternative energy and efficiency efforts that would otherwise reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Adding insult to injury, Lovins also says that nuclear power is "grossly uncompetitive, unneeded and obsolete" and "weakens electric reliability and national security."

The head of Maryland PIRG picked up on Lovins' line of thinking, telling Carbon Control News (Aug. 8) that "efficiency programs and renewables such as wind and solar can provide more carbon-abatement per dollar while avoiding the downsides of nuclear power."

The movement to block the Calvert Cliffs plant also has an international component. Greenpeace has taken its anti-nuclear jihad to Finland, where a private utility company is currently building a European Pressurized Reactor (EPR) — a safer, more reliable and cheaper next-generation reactor. But Greenpeace has alleged technical and safety problems with the EPR and misconduct in the Finns' safety approval process. Though the Finnish regulatory authority has rejected the misconduct claims, it nevertheless announced that it plans further studies on the EPR's safety.

This, of course, has delighted the opponents of the Calvert Cliffs expansion since the reactor that has been proposed to be built is an EPR.

And the greens aren't just going after the Calvert Cliffs plant, they are turning their sights on the entire nuclear industry. No doubt this is a direct result of the industry's effort to expand in the wake of global warming hysteria, which has taken the form of more than 20 applications to the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Agency for new plant licenses.

Lovins claims "the nuclear industry's sales pitch is false" and that "the supposed nuclear revival is a carefully manufactured illusion that seeks to become a self-fulfilling prophecy." The Natural Resources Defense Council has a "fact sheet" on its web site entitled "New Nuclear Power Plants Are Not a Solution for America's Energy Needs."

Environmental Defense ominously intones on its web site that, "Serious questions of safety, security, waste and proliferation surround the issue of nuclear power. Until these questions are resolved satisfactorily, Environmental Defense cannot support an expansion of nuclear generating capacity."

The World Resources Institute says, "And while it can be argued that the actual risks of nuclear power are far lower than the perceived risks, and that coal-fired power plants have killed a far greater number of people than nuclear energy, most communities do not want nuclear plants nearby."

While the nuclear industry has no reason to expect better treatment from activists like Lovins, shouldn't it get at least a little friendly lip service from the Natural Resources Defense Council, Environmental Defense and the World Resources Institute — its lobbying partners in USCAP? Instead, these groups are happy to exploit the influence and resources of the likes of Exelon, FPL Group and NRG Energy to promote global warming regulation, but then feel no compunction about trying to tear down the partners it exploited.

Is the industry OK with such two-facedness? Will anyone complain or drop out of USCAP? We'll see.

Meantime, it's ironic and disturbing that the nuclear industry can figure out how to safely and productively harness the power of the atom, but it can't figure out that lobbying with the enemy is a bad idea.

6. COGNITIVE DISSONANCE

by Philip Stott

“Un experto de la Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México pronosticó que en alrededor de diez años la Tierra entrará a una ‘pequeña era [edad] de hielo’ que durará de 60 a 80 años y será causada por la disminución de la actividad solar.” [Milenio, August 16]

I must ask a very serious and urgent question of our media. Why do you continue to talk glibly about current climate ‘warming’ when it is now widely acknowledged that there has been no ‘global warming’ for the last ten years, a cooling trend that many think may continue for at least another ten years? How can you talk of the climate ‘warming’ when, on the key measures, it isn't? And now a leading Mexican scientist is even predicting that we may enter another ‘Little Ice Age’ - a ‘pequeña era [edad] de hielo’.

Such media behaviour exhibits a classic condition known as ‘cognitive dissonance’. This is experienced when belief in a grand narrative persists blindly even when the facts in the real world begin to contradict what the narrative is saying. Sadly, our media have come to have a vested interest in ‘global warming’, as have so many politicians and activists. They are terrified that the public may begin to question everything if climate is acknowledged, on air and in the press, not to be playing ball with their pet trope.

But that is precisely what is happening. Since 1998, according to all the main world temperature records, including the UK Met Office's ‘HadCRUT3’ data set [a globally-gridded product of near-surface temperatures consisting of annual differences from 1961-90 normals], the world average surface temperature has exhibited no warming whatsoever. Indeed, the trend has been a combination of flat-lining and cooling, with a particularly marked plunge over the last few months. Many parts of the world, including Canada, China, and the US, have just experienced their worst winter in years (as is currently Australia), while skiing in Scotland has benefited from the trend, and the summit of Snowdon carried snow even up to the end of April.

To put it simply, since 1998, there has been no ‘global warming’, despite the fact that, during this same period, atmospheric CO₂ has continued to rise, from c. 368 ppm by volume in 1998 to c. 384 ppmv in November, 2007. Moreover, another ‘greenhouse gas’, methane, has also been rising, following a period of relative stability, by about 0.5% between 2006 and 2007.

Of course, little can be gleaned from a short data run of only 10-years, a fact, I might add, which ‘global warming’ fanatics have too often failed to stress. Nevertheless, recent work demonstrates that the Earth's temperature may stay roughly the same for at least a further decade through the impact of a phenomenon known as the Atlantic Multidecadal Oscillation (AMO). The cause of this oscillation, which is related to the currents that bring warmth from the tropics to Europe, is not well understood, but the cycle appears to have an effect every 60 to 70 years. It may well prove to be part of the explanation as to why global mean temperatures rose in the early years of the 20th Century, before then starting to cool again in the late-1940s. Thus, according to the new model, cooling remains on the cards for another ten years at least, making a potential 20 years of cooling in all.

But the sun isn't playing ball either. The big question is: “What has happened to Solar Cycle 24?” Solar-cycle intensity is measured by the maximum number of sunspots. These are dark blotches on the Sun that mark areas of heightened magnetic activity. The more sunspots there are, the more likely it is that major solar storms will occur, and these are related to warming on Earth; the fewer the sunspots, the more likely there is to be cooling. The next 11-year cycle of solar storms [Solar Cycle 24] was predicted to have begun

in autumn, 2006, but it appears to have been delayed. It was then expected to take off in March last year, and to peak in late-2011, or mid-2012. But the Sun remains largely spotless, except for an odd fading spot. This delayed onset has somewhat confused the official Solar Cycle 24 Prediction Panel, leaving them evenly split as to whether a weak or a strong period of solar storms now lies ahead.

However, some other scientists are deeply concerned, including Phil Chapman, the first Australian to become a NASA astronaut, who comments: “Disconcerting as it may be to true believers in global warming, the average temperature on Earth has remained steady or slowly declined during the past decade, despite the continued increase in the atmospheric concentration of carbon dioxide, and now the global temperature is falling precipitously.”

Chapman then explains why the absence of sunspots might exacerbate this cooling trend: “The reason this matters is that there is a close correlation between variations in the sunspot cycle and Earth’s climate. The previous time a cycle was delayed like this was in the Dalton Minimum, an especially cold period that lasted several decades from 1790. Northern winters became ferocious: in particular, the rout of Napoleon’s Grand Army during the retreat from Moscow in 1812 was at least partly due to the lack of sunspots.”

Thus, all the immediate signs and portents are pointing in the direction of a cooling period, not a warming one.

So, why are newspapers, magazines, radio, and television not telling us all this? Because they have invested so much effort over the last ten years in hyping up the exact opposite. Moreover, it is especially pathetic sophistry to claim, as dedicated ‘global warmers’ are wont to do, that ‘natural forces’ are having the temerity to “suppress” ‘global warming’. The fundamental point has always been this: climate change is governed by hundreds of factors, or variables, and the very idea that we can manage climate change predictably by understanding and manipulating at the margins one politically-selected factor is as misguided as it gets.

And now a Mexican expert, Victor Manuel Velasco Herrera (National Autonomous University of Mexico), is warning that the Earth will enter a new ‘Little Ice Age’ for up to 80 years due to decreases in solar activity [see: ‘Auguran breve era del hielo en 2010’, Milenio, August 16]. He describes the predictions of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) as “erroneous”.

If this cooling phase really does persist, it will be illuminating to observe how long our media can maintain its befuddled state of ‘cognitive dissonance’.

Mind you, I jolly well hope that we aren’t entering a cooling period - it’s the very last thing we need! Give me warming any time. Brrrr!

7. THE TIPPING POINT?

By Jim Hansen, NY Review of Books Vol 53, January 12, 2006

The Earth’s climate is nearing, but has not passed, a tipping point beyond which it will be impossible to avoid climate change with far-ranging undesirable consequences. These include not only the loss of the Arctic as we know it, with all that implies for wildlife and indigenous peoples, but losses on a much vaster scale due to rising seas.

Ocean levels will increase slowly at first, as losses at the fringes of Greenland and Antarctica due to accelerating ice streams are nearly balanced by increased snowfall and ice sheet thickening in the ice sheet interiors. But as Greenland and West Antarctic ice is softened and lubricated by meltwater, and as buttressing ice shelves disappear because of a warming ocean, the balance will tip toward the rapid disintegration of ice sheets.

The Earth’s history suggests that with warming of two to three degrees, the new sea level will include not only most of the ice from Greenland and West Antarctica, but a portion of East Antarctica, raising the sea level by twenty-five meters, or eighty feet. Within a century, coastal dwellers will be faced with irregular flooding associated with storms. They will have to continually rebuild above a transient water level.

This grim scenario can be halted if the growth of greenhouse gas emissions is slowed in the first quarter of this century.

 —From a presentation to the American Geophysical Union, December 6, 2005

8. THEORETICAL PHYSICIST AND MATHEMATICIAN FREEMAN DYSON ON GLOBAL WARMING

in the New York Review of Books: Notable & Quotable July 10, 2008; Page A15

Environmentalism has replaced socialism as the leading secular religion. And the ethics of environmentalism are fundamentally sound. Scientists and economists can agree with Buddhist monks and Christian activists that ruthless destruction of natural habitats is evil and careful preservation of birds and butterflies is good. The worldwide community of environmentalists -- most of whom are not scientists -- holds the moral high ground, and is guiding human societies toward a hopeful future. . . .

Unfortunately, some members of the environmental movement have also adopted as an article of faith the belief that global warming is the greatest threat to the ecology of our planet. That is one reason why the arguments about global warming have become bitter and passionate. Much of the public has come to believe that anyone who is skeptical about the dangers of global warming is an enemy of the environment. The skeptics now have the difficult task of convincing the public that the opposite is true. Many of the skeptics are passionate environmentalists. They are horrified to see the obsession with global warming distracting public attention from what they see as more serious and more immediate dangers to the planet, including problems of nuclear weaponry, environmental degradation, and social injustice. Whether they turn out to be right or wrong, their arguments on these issues deserve to be heard.